from the first millet of the year—a pretty custom known as *puthow kwoa*, honouring with porridge.

All are equally anxious for a child to be born, the husband and wife because they want a son and the wife's parents and kin because they cannot, without risking complications, dispose of the cattle on the marriage till a first-born completes the union. Those whose daughters they might wish to marry would not be happy about accepting such cattle as bridewealth in case they had suddenly to be returned to the husband. When a child is born the mother remains with her parents till she has weaned it. This is a suitable regulation, because after the bridewealth has been paid the husband's father is likely to be short of lactating cows, while the wife's parents will have plenty of milk from their herd. If, for some reason, the wife goes to live with her husband before the child is weaned, it may not be weaned without the consent of her parents, and I have seen a husband pay several cattle to atone for contravention of this rule. A *ker*, first child, belongs to the home of his maternal grandparents and if he is weaned in his father's home he returns to live with them, a boy till he is initiated and a girl till she is betrothed. This is the rule, though there is variation in practice, depending on the ability of the maternal grandparents to support the child and on the relations between them and their son-in-law.

Shortly after the birth of her first-born the wife, now called *pai dap*, a nursing mother, brings the baby to her husband's home and lays him in the ashes of the hearth in the centre of his grandfather's byre, a rite known as *nong puka*, the bringing to the ashes. Beer has been prepared and is drunk by a few senior kinsmen of the husband who live in his hamlet. It is a domestic, and not a public, ceremony. The wife spends a few days in her husband's home and returns with the child to the village of her parents. She has as yet no hut of her own in her husband's homestead.

When his first-born has been weaned the husband builds his wife a hut in his father's homestead facing the family kraal. He then goes to ask his parents-in-law for his wife. They do not deny him, even if, as is likely, some of the bridewealth cattle are still owing. They give her a horn spoon and a gourd and she takes these with her to her husband's home. The gift of a spoon is emphasized by the Nuer in speaking of marriage, because it is a recognition that the woman is now, in the full sense, a wife, who will eat of the porridge of her own gardens with the milk of her own herd. She now milks her husband's cows instead of her father's and hoes the gardens of his home and not those of her childhood. Before she is given a spoon, even if she hoes a garden at her husband's home she takes the harvest back to her father, or she may live at her husband's home and cultivate in her father's village, if it is not far. It is only when a man's bride has borne him a child and tends his hearth that she becomes, in the Nuer sense, his wife. She then makes a *buor*, a mud fire-screen, and the spirit of his lineage comes to dwell there. Later his father tells him to build a byre and gives him a few cows to start a herd.

The marriage has thus reached completion through many stages: betrothal ceremony, wedding ceremony, consummation ceremony, the birth of a child, the bringing of the first-born to his father's byre, and the presentation to the wife of a spoon as a sign of her domestic separation from her family. She comes to her husband's home not as a wife but as a mother whose breasts have suckled a child of their lineage.

8:Howell E, G-5 (1942-1944)1954
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differentiation is held valid nowadays. Yet the tradition is strong, and quoted consistently by nearly all Nuer tribes.

Uninitiated Boys

Among the Zeraf Nuer no distinction was made between those having manhood status and uninitiated boys. An uninitiated boy (*dhol*) was held fully responsible for his actions and his kinsmen were bound to assist him. Likewise the killing of an uninitiated boy demanded full rates of compensation. Boys who had not reached the status of warrior, however, were not expected to fight in a serious manner, and it was unlikely that an adult would kill a boy except by accident.

In Western Nuer some distinction seems to have been made even in the past. Writing in 1936, Captain H. A. Romilly records:

> Some doubt still exists about blood-money to be paid when 'ungarred' boys are killed.[1] The new decision in 1936 is: 'ungarred' boys killed by accident: 10 head of cattle; 'ungarred' boys killed on purpose: 20 head of cattle.[2]

It is difficult to say whether these fine distinctions are traditional or the result of past settlements in which the Government had a hand. It is, however, safe to say that theoretically full compensation would be demanded but would probably not be paid, as a compromise was more likely.

This matter was raised at the Nuer Chiefs' Council of 1945, but the only decision reached concerned the killing (usually accidental) of uninitiated boys by uninitiated boys (a fairly common occurrence in Nuerland). The indemnity for intentional killing was set at 20 head of cattle (i.e. half the full indemnity); for accidental killing, 10 head of cattle.

Compensation for the Death of a Woman

Nuer do not, of course, kill women in pursuance of a feud, though a feud might follow from the killing of a woman. Compensation is demanded in full; there is no distinction between the sexes. For an unmarried girl compensation should be paid to her family. For a legally married woman it should be paid to her husband. If he has paid only part of the bridewealth for his wife, compensation will still be paid to him, but some of the cattle will be demanded by the woman's family. He will be expected to hand over to them all cattle with the exception of a number directly proportionate to the number paid by him as bridewealth. The principle of compensation carried to its logical conclusion means that a man does not pay compensation

[1] '*Ungarred*', 'uninitiated', from the Nuer *gar* to cut the forehead at initiation. Full compensation in that area was then 40 head of cattle.

[2] From unpublished administrative records.

9:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936)1936 FJ22 Nuer FJ22

warfare because they would certainly be killed if they did and the same applies to old men. Nevertheless a good number of the older men who are more active than fellow-members of their age-set will accompany expeditions. Moreover, war is organised by tribal sections based on locality and communal sentiment and not by the age-set system. The whole of a district or a tribe is summoned to take part in a feud or in a raid on the Dinka, and anyone will accompany the expedition who wishes to do so. They do not call up certain age-sets and leave others at home. During the actual fighting, while it is natural that people of roughly the same age will fight side by side, there is nothing compulsive about this arrangement and men of all ages fight together as a section. Thus when two sections unite for warfare we shall find the men of each section fighting with their section and not with their age-set. In the same way a man is not expected to fight only warriors of his own age-set but will engage with whomsoever he finds opposite to him. Hence we may say that the Nuer age-sets are not regiments, and indeed have no specific military functions, but that since age and the ability to bear arms are necessarily related it happens that active warriors are recruited from certain age-sets. On the other hand the social and economic relations of the age-set system are outstanding and it is in them rather than in its ritual that we must look for its significance.

In its economic relations Nuer social life comprises three groups of persons—the women, the men, and the boys. The productive labour of women differs in many respects from that of men but the most prominent distinction between their activities is in milking the cattle. A man may not milk the cows. This is not simply a customary division of labour, as in cooking for example, but is a ritual prohibition or taboo. Were a man to milk a cow all sorts of misfortunes would follow, in particular the death of the cow. The restriction of milking to women has far-reaching effects on their position in Nuer society. But in this respect boys are classed with the women, for they are allowed to milk the cows until they have been initiated into manhood. Consequently initiation means that a boy ceases to milk; he severs his association with women's work; he becomes a man in the sense that he joins the men's group as distinct from the women's group in social life.

If cessation from milking is the most outstanding change in a boy's occupations after initiation it is by no means the only one, for his whole

9:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936)1936 FJ22 Nuer FJ22

858 561 mode of life changes when he becomes a man, that is to say when he is made a man by social machinery, for he does not become a man in virtue of biological condition alone. An initiated boy ceases also to assist women and girls in the more menial tasks of cattle culture. It is no longer his duty to clear dung from the byres nor to smear it on the floor of the kraals[1] and dry it for fuel. Neither taboo nor shame attaches to these tasks, it is true, and if there are no women or boys to perform them a man will do them himself, but it is considered to be work for boys and girls. No more will an initiated boy have to milk the goats and sheep and take them out to pasture with the calves. Instead he will sometimes guard the main herd of cattle in their dry season pastures or more generally sit and gossip around the embers of a smouldering dung fire and wait for the womenfolk to bring him the morning meal.

A boy is everybody's servant. Not only must he milk the cattle and sheep and goats and keep clean byre and kraal but he is frequently ordered about by initiated men, sent to draw water, fetch fuel, light pipes, made to go messages, to lead the bullocks round the camp when his elders wish to leap (*rau*) behind them, and to perform any other task which they require. Certainly boyhood is the period in a man's life when he is more occupied, does more work, than at any other period of his life. One gets the impression when living in a Nuer cattle camp that among the males all the routine work of the camp is done by the boys. After initiation 884 561 461 a boy may look forward to a long life of ease. His are now the delights of sitting round a smouldering dung fire with his beloved cattle tethered in front of him. Here he can smoke, sleep, drink milk, gossip, and watch others do the daily monotonous routine work of homestead, dairy, and kraal. There is no one now to disturb his peace by ordering him about. At last he is completely his own master and may work or not as he thinks fit. Every initiated Nuer is his own lord, paying respect to age and the obligations of kinship, but free and independent, owing no man service. A newly initiated boy may now order his juniors about, see that they do their work thoroughly, and admonish and beat them if they are remiss 884 561 in any task. Even though he is quite small, and perhaps no older than many who are uninitiated, he is a *wut*, a man, while they are *dholi*, boys.

[1] "Byre" refers to the large huts in which cattle are housed in the wet season and which is used also as a men's club. "Kraal" is used to denote the space in front of the byre, sometimes enclosed, where the cattle are tethered and also for the space where they are tethered, surrounded by a wind-screen, in dry-season camps.

16: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1956
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764 in front of the dead man's hut. He also addresses the ghost and
782 tells him that he has been taken away and must turn his face to the ground and not trouble the living: 'friend, this (beast) is yours (for you). Now turn yourself to the ghosts. Turn yourself away from us. Death was not made by us in old times, it was made by God, friend. Do not trouble your people with bad dreams but regard us favourably. God has not entirely destroyed you, for there are those who come after you; you have children left behind you.' If the family have no animal to sacrifice the master of ceremonies sacrifices by cutting in two a wild cucumber. 'The half of the living, the half of the children, the right half, remains outside, being placed in the thatch of the hut. The half of the dead man is thrown into the bush.' With it is thrown out of the village the contagion of death. They say of this sacrifice '*ba kier piny ka del*', '(the dead man) is expiated in the earth with a goat', and that the badness goes into the earth with the blood and the chyme.

765 Members of the family mourn till the mortuary ceremony has been held some months after death. They shave their heads after the burial but then they do not shave them again, neither do they treat the hair with ashes nor depilate their bodies, till the period of mourning is ended. They also remove all ornaments, and the closest relatives wear a *dep liath*, a mourning cord of grass, around their waists and necks. There are no prescribed food and sex abstentions during the period of mourning though I was told that close kin may abstain from sexual relations for a few days after death 'because they are sad and thinking of their dead friend'. Less closely related persons and the wives of kin show their respect by leaving their hair untended but for a shorter time, perhaps only a month or so. When people are in mourning they do not attend dances. People do not mourn for a small child, for
[858] 'a small child is not a person (*ran*). When he tethers the cattle and herds the goats he is a person. When he cleans the byres and spreads the dung out to dry and collects it and carries it to the fires he is a person.' A man will not say that he has a son till the
[766] child is about six years of age. A small child is buried by old women and without sacrifice.

765 Four to six months after burial the mortuary ceremony is held.
775 It is known as *wocene cuol* or *cuol woc* because its purpose is to wipe out (*woc*) the debt (*cuol*) which Nuer feel to be due on account of the death. They seem to feel that there is some mis-

774 [196] and is not an integral part of him. They do not attach any importance to it and there are no beliefs and practices connected with it. They presumably see an analogy between a man's shadow and his soul, the shadow being the best way they can find to figure the sort of thing the soul might be. The analogy may derive from the idea of ghosts being shadowy replicas of the living. The fact that other creatures and things have shadows does not lead Nuer to say that they have souls; and since they have no souls, in their case the shadow does not at any time have a figurative meaning.

Nuer hold no decided opinions about the nature of the soul, which does not surprise us in view of their lack of interest in what happens after death, or of how there comes to be one. They know [842] that the foetus begins as a result of the male sperm entering into the womb. The child is begotten (*dieth*) by man. But it is also created (*cak*) by God, so it appears that they think of conception as a product of this combination of human and divine action. But it does not necessarily follow that because a man is alive he has a soul. Gatbuogh was alive. So when we observe that Nuer [858] do not mourn or hold a mortuary ceremony for a dead child, it suggests to us that either they do not think of a small child as having a soul or they regard it as immature. It is only when he begins to take part in activities of the social life that he is said to be a person (*ran*), and Nuer sometimes indicate that the sign of having become a person is the removal of the second lower incisor teeth, which is done when the child is about seven or eight years of age. On the other hand they speak of infant twins having one soul. Clearly they hold no definite opinion about the matter.

774 828 Though Nuer would not themselves bring the ideas of flesh, life, and soul so neatly together, we can see that taken together they are covered by the concepts of both *pwony* and *ran*. *Pwony* means the whole creature, the individual or the self, what is one man and not another. '*Pwonyda*' is 'myself' and '*pwonyda pany*' is 'my very self'. *Ran* is what we may describe as 'the person', the social being as distinct from the individual creature. Its plural form *nath* is the word Nuer use to distinguish themselves from other peoples. They are *nei ti nath*, people (in the general sense of the word) who are people (in the sense of persons as Nuer think of themselves). *Pwony* is, as it were, the total organism, *ran* the total personality. As I have explained, a small child is the one but not